BioMap and Living Waters

Guiding Land Conservation for Biodiversity in Massachusetts

Core Habitats of Lee

This report and associated map provide information about important sites for biodiversity conservation in your area.

This information is intended for conservation planning, and is not intended for use in state regulations.

Produced by:

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program
Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Produced in 2004

BioMap and Living Waters:
Guiding Land Conservation for Biodiversity in Massachusetts

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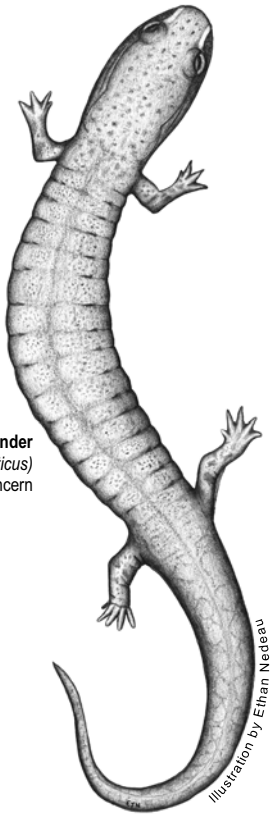
* Depending on the location of Core Habitats, your city or town may not have all of these sections.



Spring Salamander
(Gyrinophilus porphyriticus)
Species of Special Concern

Funding for this project was made available by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, contributions to the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Fund, and through the State Wildlife Grants Program of the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
North Drive, Westborough, MA 01581
Tel: (508) 792-7270, Ext. 200 Fax: (508) 792-7821
http://www.nhesp.org

For more information on rare species and natural communities, please see our fact sheets online at ***www.nhesp.org***

BioMap and Living Waters:
Guiding Land Conservation for Biodiversity in Massachusetts

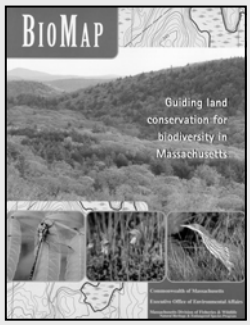
Introduction

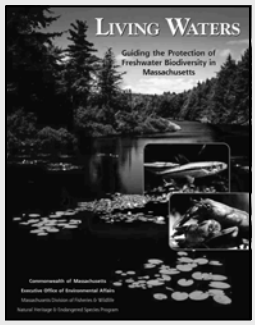
In this report, the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program provides you with site-specific biodiversity information for your area. Protecting our biodiversity today will help ensure the full variety of species and natural communities that comprise our native flora and fauna will persist for generatons to come.

The information in this report is the result of two statewide biodiversity conservation planning projects, ***BioMap*** and ***Living Waters***. The goal of the BioMap project, completed in 2001, was to identify and delineate the most important areas for the long-term viability of terrestrial, wetland, and estuarine elements of biodiversity in Massachusetts. The goal of the Living Waters project, completed in 2003, was to identify and delineate the rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds that are important for freshwater biodiversity in the Commonwealth. These two conservation plans are based on documented observations of rare species, natural communities, and exemplary habitats.

What is a Core Habitat?

Both BioMap and Living Waters delineate ***Core Habitats*** that identify the most critical sites for biodiversity conservation across the state. Core Habitats represent habitat for the state's most viable rare plant and animal populations and include exemplary natural communities and aquatic habitats. Core Habitats represent a wide diversity of rare species and natural communities (see Table 1), and these areas are also thought to contain virtually all of the other described species in Massachusetts. Statewide, BioMap Core Habitats encompass 1,380,000 acres of uplands and wetlands, and Living Waters identifies 429 Core Habitats in rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds.





Get your copy of the ***BioMap*** and ***Living Waters*** reports! Contact Natural Heritage at 508-792-7270, Ext. 200 or email natural.heritage@state.ma.us. Posters and detailed technical reports are also available.

Core Habitats and Land Conservation

One of the most effective ways to protect biodiversity for future generations is to protect Core Habitats from adverse human impacts through land conservation. For Living Waters Core Habitats, protection efforts should focus on the ***riparian areas***, the areas of land adjacent to water bodies. A naturally vegetated buffer that extends 330 feet (100 meters) from the water's edge helps to maintain cooler water temperature and to maintain the nutrients, energy, and natural flow of water needed by freshwater species.

In Support of Core Habitats

To further ensure the protection of Core Habitats and Massachusetts' biodiversity in the long-term, the BioMap and Living Waters projects identify two additional areas that help support Core Habitats.

In BioMap, areas shown as ***Supporting Natural Landscape*** provide buffers around the Core Habitats, connectivity between Core Habitats, sufficient space for ecosystems to function, and contiguous undeveloped habitat for common species. Supporting Natural Landscape was

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generated using a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) model, and its exact boundaries are less important than the general areas that it identifies. Supporting Natural Landscape represents potential land protection priorities once Core Habitat protection has been addressed.

In Living Waters, ***Critical Supporting Watersheds*** highlight the immediate portion of the watershed that sustains, or possibly degrades, each freshwater Core Habitat. These areas were also identified using a GIS model. Critical Supporting Watersheds represent developed and undeveloped lands, and can be quite large. Critical Supporting Watersheds can be helpful in land-use planning, and while they are not shown on these maps, they can be viewed in the Living Waters report or downloaded from www.mass.gov/mgis.

Understanding Core Habitat Species, Community, and Habitat Lists

What's in the List?

Included in this report is a list of the species, natural communities, and/or aquatic habitats for each Core Habitat in your city or town. The lists are organized by Core Habitat number.

For the larger Core Habitats that span more than one town, the species and community lists refer to the entire Core Habitat, not just the portion that falls within your city or town. For a list of all the state-listed rare species within your city or town's boundary, whether or not they are in Core Habitat, please see the town rare species lists available at www.nhesp.org.

The list of species and communities within a Core Habitat contains only the species and natural communities that were explicitly included in a given BioMap or Living Waters Core Habitat. Other rare species or examples of other natural communities may fall within the Core Habitat, but for various reasons are not included in the list. For instance, there are a few rare species that are omitted from the list or summary because of their particular sensitivity to the threat of collection. Likewise, the content of many very small Core Habitats are not described in this report or list, often because they contain a single location of a rare plant

Table 1. The number of rare species and types of natural communities explicitly included in the BioMap and Living Waters conservation plans, relative to the total number of native species statewide.

BioMap

	Species and Verified Natural Community Types	
Biodiversity Group	**Included in BioMap**	**Total Statewide**
Vascular Plants	246	1,538
Birds	21	221 breeding species
Reptiles	11	25
Amphibians	6	21
Mammals	4	85
Moths and Butterflies	52	An estimated 2,500 to 3,000
Damselflies and Dragonflies	25	An estimated 165
Beetles	10	An estimated 2,500 to 4,000
Natural Communities	92	> 105 community types

Living Waters

	Species	
Biodiversity Group	**Included in Living Waters**	**Total Statewide**
Aquatic Vascular Plants	23	114
Fishes	11	57
Mussels	7	12
Aquatic Invertebrates	23	An estimated > 2500

species. Some Core Habitats were created for suites of common species, such as forest birds, which are particularly threatened by habitat fragmentation. In these cases, the individual common species are not listed.

What does 'Status' mean?

The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife determines a status category for each rare species listed under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act, M.G.L. c.131A, and its implementing regulations, 321 CMR 10.00. Rare species are categorized as Endangered, Threatened, or of Special Concern according to the following:

- ***Endangered*** species are in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their range or are in danger of extirpation from Massachusetts.
- ***Threatened*** species are likely to become Endangered in Massachusetts in the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of their range.
- ***Special Concern*** species have suffered a decline that could threaten the species if allowed to continue unchecked or occur in such small numbers or with such restricted distribution or specialized habitat requirements that they could easily become Threatened in Massachusetts.

In addition, the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program maintains an unofficial ***watch list*** of plants that are tracked due to potential conservation interest or concern, but are not regulated under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act or other laws or regulations. Likewise, described natural communities are not regulated any laws or regulations, but they can help to identify ecologically important areas that are worthy of protection. The status of natural communities reflects the documented number and acreages of each community type in the state:

- ***Critically Imperiled*** communities typically have 5 or fewer documented sites or have very few remaining acres in the state.
- ***Imperiled*** communities typically have 6-20 sites or few remaining acres in the state.
- ***Vulnerable*** communities typically have 21-100 sites or limited acreage across the state.
- ***Secure*** communities typically have over 100 sites or abundant acreage across the state; however excellent examples are identified as Core Habitat to ensure continued protection.

Legal Protection of Biodiversity

BioMap and Living Waters present a powerful vision of what Massachusetts would look like with full protection of the land that supports most of our biodiversity. To create this vision, some populations of state-listed rare species were deemed more likely to survive over the long-term than others.

Regardless of their potential viability, all sites of state-listed species have full legal protection under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (M.G.L. c.131A) and its implementing regulations (321 CMR 10.00). Habitat of state-listed wildlife is also protected under the Wetlands Protection Act Regulations (310 CMR 10.37 and 10.59). The ***Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas*** shows **Priority Habitats**, which are used for regulation under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act and Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (M.G.L. c.30) and **Estimated Habitats**, which are used for regulation of rare wildlife habitat under the Wetlands Protection Act. For more information on rare species regulations, see the *Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas*, available from the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program in book and CD formats.

BioMap and Living Waters are conservation planning tools and do not, in any way, supplant the Estimated and Priority Habitat Maps which have regulatory significance. Unless and until the combined BioMap and Living Waters vision is fully realized, we must continue to protect all populations of our state-listed species and their habitats through environmental regulation.

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
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Understanding Core Habitat Summaries

Following the BioMap and Living Waters Core Habitat species and community lists, there is a descriptive summary of each Core Habitat that occurs in your city or town. This summary highlights some of the outstanding characteristics of each Core Habitat, and will help you learn more about your city or town's biodiversity. You can find out more information about many of these species and natural communities by looking at specific ***fact sheets*** at www.nhesp.org.

Next Steps

BioMap and Living Waters were created in part to help cities and towns prioritize their land protection efforts. While there are many reasons to conserve land – drinking water protection, recreation, agriculture, aesthetics, and others – BioMap and Living Waters Core Habitats are especially helpful to municipalities seeking to protect the rare species, natural communities, and overall biodiversity within their boundaries. Please use this report and map along with the rare species and community fact sheets to appreciate and understand the biological treasures in your city or town.

Protecting Larger Core Habitats

Core Habitats vary considerably in size. For example, the average BioMap Core Habitat is 800 acres, but Core Habitats can range from less than 10 acres to greater than 100,000 acres. These larger areas reflect the amount of land needed by some animal species for breeding, feeding, nesting, overwintering, and long-term survival. Protecting areas of this size can be very challenging, and requires developing partnerships with neighboring towns.

Prioritizing the protection of certain areas within larger Core Habitats can be accomplished through further consultation with Natural Heritage Program biologists, and through additional field research to identify the most important areas of the Core Habitat.

Additional Information

If you have any questions about this report, or if you need help protecting land for biodiversity in your community, the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program staff looks forward to working with you.

Contact the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program:

by Phone *508-792-7270, Ext. 200*

by Fax: *508-792-7821*

by Email: *natural.heritage@state.ma.us*.

by Mail: *North Drive*
Westborough, MA 01581

The GIS datalayers of BioMap and Living Waters Core Habitats are available for download from MassGIS: www.mass.gov/mgis

Check out www.nhesp.org for information on:

- Rare species in your town
- Rare species fact sheets
- BioMap and Living Waters projects
- Natural Heritage publications, including:
  - Field guides
  - Natural Heritage Atlas, and more!

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BioMap: Species and Natural Communities

Lee

Core Habitat BM677

Natural Communities

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Black Ash-Red Maple-Tamarack Calcareous Seepage Swamp		Imperiled
Calcareous Sloping Fen		Imperiled
Red Oak - Sugar Maple Transition Forest		Secure
Rich, Mesic Forest Community		Vulnerable

Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Adder's-Tongue Fern	*Ophioglossum pusillum*	Threatened
Bristly Buttercup	*Ranunculus pensylvanicus*	Threatened
Bush's Sedge	*Carex bushii*	Endangered
Capillary Beak-Sedge	*Rhynchospora capillacea*	Endangered
Chestnut-Colored Sedge	*Carex castanea*	Endangered
Crooked-Stem Aster	*Symphotrichum prenanthoides*	Threatened
Dioecious Sedge	*Carex sterilis*	Threatened
Fen Sedge	*Carex tetanica*	Special Concern
Foxtail Sedge	*Carex alopecoidea*	Threatened
Gray's Sedge	*Carex grayi*	Threatened
Hairy Wild Rye	*Elymus villosus*	Endangered
Handsome Sedge	*Carex formosa*	Threatened
Hemlock Parsley	*Conioselinum chinense*	Special Concern
Intermediate Spike-Sedge	*Eleocharis intermedia*	Threatened
Mossy-Cup Oak	*Quercus macrocarpa*	Special Concern
Northern Bedstraw	*Galium boreale*	Endangered
Pale Green Orchis	*Platanthera flava var herbiola*	Threatened
Pink Pyrola	*Pyrola asarifolia var purpurea*	Endangered

Sensitive Rare Plant		
Smooth Rock-Cress	*Arabis laevigata*	Threatened
Stiff Gentian	*Gentianella quinquefolia*	Watch Listed
Wapato	*Sagittaria cuneata*	Threatened
White Adder's-Mouth	*Malaxis monophyllos var brachypoda*	Endangered

Invertebrates

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Early Hairstreak	*Erora laeta*	Threatened
Eastern Veined White	*Pieris oleracea*	Threatened

Vertebrates

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
American Bittern	*Botaurus lentiginosus*	Endangered
Common Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus*	Special Concern
Four-toed Salamander	*Hemidactylium scutatum*	Special Concern
Jefferson Salamander	*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*	Special Concern
Least Bittern	*Ixobrychus exilis*	Endangered
Marbled Salamander	*Ambystoma opacum*	Threatened
Spring Salamander	*Gyrinophilus porphyriticus*	Special Concern
Wood Turtle	*Clemmys insculpta*	Special Concern

Core Habitat BM735

Natural Communities

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Acidic Graminoid Fen		Vulnerable
Level Bog		Vulnerable

Invertebrates

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Tule Bluet	*Enallagma carunculatum*	Special Concern

BioMap: Species and Natural Communities

Lee

Core Habitat BM761

Natural Communities

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Black Ash-Red Maple-Tamarack Calcareous Seepage Swamp		Imperiled

Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Hemlock Parsley	*Conioselinum chinense*	Special Concern
Labrador Bedstraw	*Galium labradoricum*	Threatened

Core Habitat BM765

Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Small Site for Rare Plant		

Core Habitat BM811

Natural Communities

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Calcareous Forest Seep Community		Imperiled
Calcareous Seepage Marsh		Imperiled
Calcareous Sloping Fen		Imperiled
Deep Emergent Marsh		Secure
High-Terrace Floodplain Forest		Imperiled
Low-Energy Riverbank		Secure
Major-River Floodplain Forest		Imperiled
Mud Flat		Secure
Rich, Mesic Forest Community		Vulnerable
Shallow Emergent Marsh		Secure
Shrub Swamp		Secure

Small-River Floodplain Forest	Imperiled
Wet Meadow	Secure

Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Andrews' Bottle Gentian	*Gentiana andrewsii*	Endangered
Fen Sedge	*Carex tetanica*	Special Concern
Intermediate Spike-Sedge	*Eleocharis intermedia*	Threatened
Long-Styled Sanicle	*Sanicula odorata*	Threatened
Pale Green Orchis	*Platanthera flava var herbiola*	Threatened

Invertebrates

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Williams' Tigermoth	*Grammia williamsii*	Watch Listed

Vertebrates

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Spring Salamander	*Gyrinophilus porphyriticus*	Special Concern
Wood Turtle	*Clemmys insculpta*	Special Concern

Core Habitat BM820

Vertebrates

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Spring Salamander	*Gyrinophilus porphyriticus*	Special Concern

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BioMap: Core Habitat Summaries

Lee

Core Habitat BM677

This Core Habitat includes portions of the Housatonic River, Sackett Brook, Yokun Brook, Pleasant Valley and Lenox Mountain. From riparian habitats and calcareous wetlands to large areas of Northern Hardwoods, the diversity of this Core Habitat supports rare species of salamanders, turtles, marsh birds, and butterflies. The calcareous bedrock here supports many high-quality natural communities that contain a wealth of biodiversity, most notably several important rare plant populations. Large portions of this Core Habitat are protected as conservation land and additional protection priorities include areas along the Housatonic River, the lower and middle reaches of Yokun Brook, and around Mud Pond.

Natural Communities

This Core Habitat contains a good diversity of exemplary natural communities that are associated with the porous calcareous bedrock commonly found in this area of the Berkshires. An excellent Calcareous Sloping Fen occurs near Mud Pond. Calcareous Sloping Fens are open, sedge-dominated wetlands occurring on slight to moderate slopes where there is calcareous groundwater seepage. They are rare species "hot spots" with many associated rare plant and animal species. Two good-quality Black Ash-Red Maple-Tamarack Calcareous Seepage Swamps occur in basins below Mahanna Cobble. Black Ash-Red Maple-Tamarack Calcareous Seepage Swamps are mixed deciduous-coniferous forested swamps occurring in areas where there is calcium-rich groundwater seepage. This nutrient enrichment results in many rare calcium-loving plant species.

Plants

A tremendous diversity of rare plant species that are adapted to calcareous fens, swamps, meadows and forests live within this large Core Habitat. For example, a vigorous population of Fen Sedge and one of the state's two known populations of the Capillary Beaked-Sedge inhabit open calcareous peatlands in this area. The state's most outstanding population of Wapato, a rare relative of the Common Arrowhead, makes its home here in a floodplain community. Wet meadow species such as Stiff Gentian and Pale Green Orchis are also present in this Core Habitat.

Invertebrates

This Core Habitat includes undeveloped and unfragmented areas of Northern Hardwoods Forest in northwestern Lenox and southeastern Pittsfield that are habitat for rare butterflies including the Early Hairstreak and the Eastern Veined White. While both of these butterflies may be found within sunny openings in the forest, the most critical areas are those with their larval host plants - Beech trees for the Early Hairstreak and Toothwort and other mustard family plants for the Eastern Veined White. The part of this Core Habitat in southeastern Pittsfield is located less than 10 km from other habitat for the Eastern Veined White in northeastern Pittsfield and Washington, which probably allows for dispersal of individual butterflies between all of these areas.

Vertebrates

Significant habitat for Wood Turtles is present along the Housatonic River, Sackett Brook, and in Pleasant Valley where mosaics of riparian habitats include miles of meandering river and streams, old river oxbows, wet meadows, shrub and wooded swamps, and adjacent upland forests and fields. Along the Housatonic River and the lower reaches of Sackett Brook, shallow freshwater marshes and wet meadows, including beaver-impounded wetlands and old oxbows, provide habitat for the American Bittern, a rare marsh bird. Riverine marshes that have a good interspersion of cattails, aquatic bed vegetation, and open water provide habitat for American and Least Bitterns, Common Moorhens, and other marsh birds. Also in this Core Habitat, mixed upland forests with clusters of vernal pools support populations of Jefferson and Marbled Salamanders, while forested and shrub wetlands and seeps with abundant sphagnum moss provide significant habitat for Four-toed Salamanders. In portions of the Core Habitat that are at higher elevations, the cold, high-gradient brooks and seeps provide habitat for Spring Salamanders.

Land protection within this Core Habitat should focus on protecting large areas of connected riparian habitat, especially between Yokun Brook and the Housatonic River, and expanding areas of existing conservation land. Wood Turtles will benefit from the protection of undeveloped riparian corridors that extend out at least 600 yards along both sides of the Housatonic River and its tributaries. Another conservation priority should be areas of mature deciduous or mixed forest with clusters of vernal pools that provide breeding habitat for Jefferson or Marbled Salamanders. Mature, rich mesic or floodplain forests at lower elevations are especially important habitat for a variety of songbirds, including Wood Thrush.

Core Habitat BM735

This Core Habitat includes natural wetland communities at Halfway Pond, as well as habitat for invertebrates such as the Tule Bluet damselfly. This Core Habitat is completely undeveloped and unfragmented, and located entirely within the October Mountain State Forest.

Natural Communities

Halfway Pond contains a peatland complex consisting of two exemplary natural communities, a Level Bog and an Acidic Graminoid Fen. Level Bogs are dwarf shrub peatlands, generally with pronounced hummock and hollow formations. These wetland peatlands are our most acidic and nutrient-poor, because they receive little overland water input, and are not connected to the water table. Acidic Graminoid Fens are sedge and Sphagnum-dominated acidic peatlands that experience some groundwater and/or surface water flow but no calcareous seepage. Standing water is often present throughout much of the growing season. The wetland here is relatively isolated from human disturbances by a moderate buffer of natural vegetation.

Invertebrates

This Core Habitat includes Felton Lake, Halfway Pond, and other wetlands in the vicinity that are habitat for the rare Tule Bluet damselfly.

BioMap: Core Habitat Summaries

Lee

Core Habitat BM761

Natural Communities

This Core Habitat contains a good example of a Black Ash-Red Maple-Tamarack Calcareous Seepage Swamp, an unusual community type. Black Ash-Red Maple-Tamarack Calcareous Seepage Swamps are mixed deciduous-coniferous forested swamps occurring in areas where there is calcium-rich groundwater seepage. This nutrient enrichment results in many rare calcium-loving plant species.

Plants

Two wetland-adapted rare plant species are located within a calcareous peatland here: Labrador Bedstraw and Hemlock Parsley.

Core Habitat BM811

This Core Habitat encompasses portions of Hop Brook and its tributaries, as well as a section of the Housatonic River in Lee. It contains a mosaic of old fields, sedge meadows, and shrubby fens. Included are habitats for two rare moths, Wood Turtles, and Spring Salamanders. There are also several natural communities of note, and a diversity of rare plants adapted to the calcareous conditions found here. Portions of the Core Habitat are protected within the Hop Brook Wildlife Management Area, and further protection of the remainder is needed.

Natural Communities

This Core Habitat contains a complex of wetland communities that occur along Hop Brook. The most notable of these is the extensive Deep Emergent Marsh. Deep Emergent Marshes are graminoid wetlands occurring on saturated soils that are seasonally flooded. They generally form in broad, flat areas bordering slow rivers or along pond margins, and often grade into Shrub Swamps. Although invasive exotic species are degrading the community here, it has maintained the characteristic plant species diversity and remains an important area for several wetland birds. Also of note in this Core Habitat is a large Calcareous Forested Seep. Calcareous Forest Seeps are found on wet slopes, where calcium-rich groundwater seeps out of the earth. The overstory is similar to the surrounding forest, but many typical calcareous wetland ferns, shrubs, and other plants occur as well.

Plants

A variety of rare plant species adapted to calcareous soils live within the natural communities contained in this Core Habitat. For example, Andrews' Bottle Gentian, which blooms violet-blue in late summer, and the less conspicuous Fen Sedge can be found in wet meadow communities along Hop Brook.

Invertebrates

The rare moth species, Williams' Tiger Moth, was documented at this site more than 30 years ago, and likely still persists here today.

Vertebrates

This Core Habitat encompasses riparian habitats and adjacent uplands along 2 miles of the Housatonic River and 3 miles of Hop Brook in Lee and Tyringham. These areas provide significant habitat for Wood Turtles, despite being surrounded by roads. Wood Turtles will utilize the long meandering stretches of the Housatonic River and Hop Brook and adjacent wet meadows, shrub swamps, and forested wetlands, upland forests, and old fields. Coldwater, high-gradient brooks at the headwaters of Mad River and a tributary of Hop Brook also provide significant habitat for Spring Salamanders. Although portions of this Core Habitat have been protected as conservation land, large and important areas remain unprotected.

Core Habitat BM820

Vertebrates

This Core Habitat encompasses over 10 connected miles of coldwater, high-gradient brooks and headwater seeps that provide habitat for Spring Salamanders in East and West Brooks in Great Barrington and Monterey. This area is almost entirely contained within Beartown State Forest.

Living Waters: Species and Habitats

Lee

Core Habitat LW236

Invertebrates

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Pilsbry's Spire Snail	*Pyrgulopsis lustrica*	Endangered

Core Habitat LW305

Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Water Star-grass	*Heteranthera dubia*	Watch Listed

Fishes

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Longnose Sucker	*Catostomus catostomus*	Special Concern

Living Waters: Core Habitat Summaries

Lee

Core Habitat LW236

Laurel Lake is one of only two sites in Massachusetts where the Endangered Pilsbry's Spire Snail is currently known. This snail has been found around the perimeter of the lake, but deeper portions likely provide critical overwintering habitat. Without conservation attention, this species is in danger of disappearing from the state's landscape.

Core Habitat LW305

This large Core Habitat supports the Longnose Sucker, a fish Species of Special Concern. This species is restricted to the western watersheds of Massachusetts, where it is typically found in cold, clean, oxygen-rich streams with gravel bottoms. The Longnose Sucker sometimes migrates many miles to reach its spawning grounds. The eggs are released over the gravel bottom, making them susceptible to excess sedimentation, flow alterations, and increases in water temperature. These habitat degradations can be particularly detrimental to the reproductive success of this slow-growing fish that does not reach maturity until 5 to 7 years of age.

Shallow areas of the Housatonic River near the confluence with Hop Brook also support the uncommon, yellow-flowered Water Star-Grass. Native freshwater plants like the Water Star-Grass are an important component of aquatic ecosystems, providing habitat and nutrition for fishes and invertebrates, and adding oxygen to the water through photosynthesis. Protecting the riparian areas adjacent to this Core Habitat and controlling stormwater runoff will help maintain the quality of this freshwater habitat.

Help Save Endangered Wildlife!

Please contribute on your Massachusetts income tax form or directly to the

Natural Heritage &
Endangered Species Fund

To learn more about the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program and the Commonwealth's rare species, visit our web site at: www.nhesp.org.